

☞ Your Orders ☞

Secret

*By the Commissioners for
Executing the Office of
Lord High Admiral of
Great Britain etc.*

Whereas we have, in obedience to the King's commands, caused His Majesty's Bark the Endeavour, whereof you are commander, to be fitted out in a proper manner for receiving such persons as the Royal Society should think fit to appoint to observe the passage of the planet Venus over the disc of the sun on the 3rd of June 1769 . . .

You are to make the best of your way to Plymouth Sound, where we have ordered the crew of the bark to be paid two months' wages in advance. When they have received the same you are to put to sea with the first opportunity of wind and weather, and make the best of your way to the island of Madeira and there take on board such a quantity of wine as you can conveniently stow for the use of the bark's company.

Having so done you are to put to sea and proceed round Cape Horn to Port Royal Harbour in King George's Island, situated in 17 degrees and 30 minutes of south latitude, and 150 degrees of longitude west of the meridian of the Royal Observatory at Greenwich.

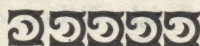
You are at liberty to touch upon the coast of Brazil, or at Port Egmont in Falkland Isles, or at both in your way thither, if you find it necessary for completing your water and procuring refreshments for the bark's company.

We recommend it to you to stand well to the southward in your passage round the Cape, in order to make a good westing; taking care however to fall into the parallel of King George's Island at least 120 leagues to the eastward of it and using your best endeavours to arrive there at least a month or six weeks before the 3rd day of June next, that Mr. Green and you will have leisure to adjust and try your instruments before the observation . . .

You are to endeavour by all proper means to cultivate a friendship with the natives, presenting them such trifles as may be acceptable to them, exchanging with them for provisions (of which there is great plenty) such of the merchandise you have been directed to provide, as they may value, and showing them every kind of civility and regard. But as Captain Wallis has represented the island to be very populous, and the natives (as well there as at the other islands which he visited) to be rather treacherous than otherwise, you are to be cautious not to let yourself be surprised by them, but to be constantly on your guard against any accident.

You are at all opportunities when the service upon which you are employed will admit of it, to make such farther surveys and plans, and take such views of the island, its harbours and bays, as you conceive may be useful to navigation or necessary to give us a more perfect idea and description than we have hitherto received of it . . .

When this service is performed, you are to put to sea without loss of time, and carry into execution the additional instructions contained in the enclosed sealed packet . . .



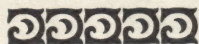


You are to send by all proper conveyances to the Secretary of the Royal Society copies of the observations you shall have made of the transit of Venus; and you are at the same time to send to our Secretary, for our information, accounts of your proceedings . . . And upon your arrival in England you are immediately to repair to this office in order to lay before us a full account of your proceedings . . . taking care before you leave the vessel to demand from the officers and petty officers the log books and journals they may have kept . . . and enjoining them, and the whole crew, not to divulge where they have been until they shall have permission to do so.

To the flag officers, captains and commanders of His Majesty's Ships and vessels to whom this shall be exhibited.

Whereas we have directed Lieut James Cook to proceed in His Majesty's Bark the Endeavour upon a particular service, you are hereby required and directed not to demand of him a sight of the instructions he has received . . . nor upon any pretence whatever to detain him, but on the contrary to give him any assistance he may stand in need of . . .

*Additional Instructions for Lt James Cook,
Appointed to Command His Majesty's Bark the Endeavour.*



Secret

Whereas the making discoveries of countries hitherto unknown, and the attaining a knowledge of distant parts which though formerly discovered have yet been but imperfectly explored, will redound greatly to the honour of this nation as a maritime power, as well as to the dignity of the Crown of Great Britain, and may tend greatly to the advancement of the trade and navigation thereof; and whereas there is reason to imagine that a continent or land of great extent, may be found to the southward of the track lately made by Captain Wallis in His Majesty's Ship the Dolphin or of the track of any former navigators in pursuits of the like kind; you are therefore in pursuance of His Majesty's pleasure hereby required and directed to put to sea with the bark you command as soon as the observation of the transit of the planet Venus shall be finished and observe the following instructions.

You are to proceed to the southward in order to make discovery of the continent above mentioned until you arrive in the latitude of 40° , unless you sooner fall in with it. But not having discovered it or any evident signs of it in that run, you are to proceed in search of it to the westward between the latitude before mentioned and the latitude of 35° until you discover it, or fall in with the eastern side of the land discovered by Tasman and now called New Zealand.

If you discover the continent above mentioned . . . you are to employ yourself diligently in exploring as great an extent of the coast as you can . . .

You are also carefully to observe the nature of the soil and the products thereof . . .

You are likewise to observe the genius, temper, disposition and number of the natives, if there be any, and endeavour by all proper means to cultivate a friendship and alliance with them . . .

You are also with the consent of the natives to take possession of convenient situations in the country in the name of the King of Great Britain . . .

But if you should fail of discovering the continent before mentioned, you will upon falling in with New Zealand carefully observe the latitude and longitude in which that land is situated, and explore as much of the coast as the condition of the bark, the health of her crew, and the state of your provisions will admit of . . .

You will also observe with accuracy the situation of such islands as you may discover in the course of your voyage that have not hitherto been discovered by any Europeans, and take possession for His Majesty and make surveys and draughts of such of them as may appear to be of consequence, without suffering yourself however to be thereby diverted from the object which you are always to have in view, the discovery of the southern continent so often mentioned.

But for as much as in an undertaking of this nature several emergencies may arise not to be foreseen . . . you are in all such cases to proceed as upon advice with your officers you shall judge most advantageous to the service on which you are employed.

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